UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/RES/45/110
2 April 1991

Forty-fifth session
Agenda item 100

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[on the report of the Third Committee (A/45/756)]

45/110. United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for Non-custodial Measures (The Tokyo Rules)

The General Assembly,

Bearing in mind the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1/ and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 2/ as well as other international human rights instruments pertaining to the rights of persons in conflict with the law,

Bearing in mind also the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, 3/ adopted by the First United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, and the important contribution of those Rules to national policies and practices,

Recalling resolution 8 of the Sixth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders 4/ on alternatives to imprisonment,

---

1/ Resolution 217 A (III).

2/ See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

3/ See Human Rights: A Compilation of International Instruments (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.88.XIV.1), sect. G.

4/ See Sixth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, Caracas, 25 August-5 September 1980: report prepared by the Secretariat (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.81.IV.4), chap. I, sect. B.

Recalling also resolution 16 of the Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders 5/ on the reduction of the prison population, alternatives to imprisonment, and social integration of offenders,

Recalling further section XI of Economic and Social Council resolution 1986/10 of 21 May 1986, on alternatives to imprisonment, in which the Secretary-General was requested to prepare a report on alternatives to imprisonment for the Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders and to study that question with a view to the formulation of basic principles in that area, with the assistance of the United Nations institutes for the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders,

Recognizing the need to develop local, national, regional and international approaches and strategies in the field of non-institutional treatment of offenders and the need to formulate standard minimum rules, as emphasized in the section of the report of the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control on its fourth session, concerning the methods and measures likely to be most effective in preventing crime and improving the treatment of offenders, 6/

Convinced that alternatives to imprisonment can be an effective means of treating offenders within the community to the best advantage of both the offenders and society,

Aware that the restriction of liberty is justifiable only from the viewpoints of public safety, crime prevention, just retribution and deterrence and that the ultimate goal of the criminal justice system is the reintegration of the offender into society,

Emphasizing that the increasing prison population and prison overcrowding in many countries constitute factors that create difficulties for the proper implementation of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners,

Noting with appreciation the work accomplished by the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control, as well as by the Interregional Preparatory Meeting for the Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders on topic II, "Criminal justice policies in relation to problems of imprisonment, other penal sanctions and alternative measures", and by the regional preparatory meetings for the Eighth Congress,

Expressing its gratitude to the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders for the work accomplished in

---

5/ See Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, Milan, 26 August-6 September 1985: report prepared by the Secretariat (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.86.IV.1), chap. I, sect. E.

6/ E/CN.5/536, annex IV.

the development of standard minimum rules for non-custodial measures, as well as to the various intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations involved, in particular, the International Penal and Penitentiary Foundation for its contribution to the preparatory work,

1. Adopts the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for Non-custodial Measures, contained in the annex to the present resolution, and approves the recommendation of the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control that the Rules should be known as "the Tokyo Rules";

2. Recommends the Tokyo Rules for implementation at the national, regional and interregional levels, taking into account the political, economic, social and cultural circumstances and traditions of countries;

3. Calls upon Member States to apply the Tokyo Rules in their policies and practice;

4. Invites Member States to bring the Tokyo Rules to the attention of, in particular, law enforcement officials, prosecutors, judges, probation officers, lawyers, victims, offenders, social services and non-governmental organizations involved in the application of non-custodial measures, as well as members of the executive, the legislature and the general public;

5. Requests Member States to report on the implementation of the Tokyo Rules every five years, beginning in 1994;

6. Urges the regional commissions, the United Nations institutes for the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders, specialized agencies and other entities within the United Nations system, other intergovernmental organizations concerned and non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council to be actively involved in the implementation of the Tokyo Rules;

7. Calls upon the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control to consider, as a matter of priority, the implementation of the present resolution;

8. Requests the Secretary-General to take the necessary steps to prepare a commentary to the Tokyo Rules, which is to be submitted to the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control at its twelfth session for approval and further dissemination, paying special attention to the legal safeguards, the implementation of the Rules and the development of similar guidelines at the regional level;

9. Invites the United Nations institutes for the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders to assist the Secretary-General in that task;

10. Urges intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other entities concerned to remain actively involved in this initiative;

11. Requests the Secretary-General to take steps, as appropriate, to ensure the widest possible dissemination of the Tokyo Rules, including their transmission

to Governments, interested intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other parties concerned;

12. Also requests the Secretary-General to prepare every five years, beginning in 1994, a report on the implementation of the Tokyo Rules for submission to the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control;

13. Further requests the Secretary-General to assist Member States, at their request, in the implementation of the Tokyo Rules and to report regularly thereon to the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control;

14. Requests that the present resolution and the text of the annex be brought to the attention of all United Nations bodies concerned and be included in the next edition of the United Nations publication entitled Human Rights: A Compilation of International Instruments.

68th plenary meeting
14 December 1990

ANNEX

United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for Non-custodial Measures (The Tokyo Rules)

I. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. Fundamental aims

1.1 The present Standard Minimum Rules provide a set of basic principles to promote the use of non-custodial measures, as well as minimum safeguards for persons subject to alternatives to imprisonment.

1.2 The Rules are intended to promote greater community involvement in the management of criminal justice, specifically in the treatment of offenders, as well as to promote among offenders a sense of responsibility towards society.

1.3 The Rules shall be implemented taking into account the political, economic, social and cultural conditions of each country and the aims and objectives of its criminal justice system.

1.4 When implementing the Rules, Member States shall endeavour to ensure a proper balance between the rights of individual offenders, the rights of victims, and the concern of society for public safety and crime prevention.

1.5 Member States shall develop non-custodial measures within their legal systems to provide other options, thus reducing the use of imprisonment, and to rationalize criminal justice policies, taking into account the observance of human rights, the requirements of social justice and the rehabilitation needs of the offender.

2. The scope of non-custodial measures

2.1 The relevant provisions of the present Rules shall be applied to all persons subject to prosecution, trial or the execution of a sentence, at all stages of the administration of criminal justice. For the purposes of the Rules, these persons are referred to as "offenders", irrespective of whether they are suspected, accused or sentenced.

2.2 The Rules shall be applied without any discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, sex, age, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

2.3 In order to provide greater flexibility consistent with the nature and gravity of the offence, with the personality and background of the offender and with the protection of society and to avoid unnecessary use of imprisonment, the criminal justice system should provide a wide range of non-custodial measures, from pre-trial to post-sentencing dispositions. The number and types of non-custodial measures available should be determined in such a way that consistent sentencing remains possible.

2.4 The development of new non-custodial measures should be encouraged and closely monitored and their use systematically evaluated.

2.5 Consideration shall be given to dealing with offenders in the community, avoiding as far as possible resort to formal proceedings or trial by a court, in accordance with legal safeguards and the rule of law.

2.6 Non-custodial measures should be used in accordance with the principle of minimum intervention.

2.7 The use of non-custodial measures should be part of the movement towards depenalization and decriminalization instead of interfering with or delaying efforts in that direction.

3. Legal safeguards

3.1 The introduction, definition and application of non-custodial measures shall be prescribed by law.

3.2 The selection of a non-custodial measure shall be based on an assessment of established criteria in respect of both the nature and gravity of the offence and the personality, the background of the offender, the purposes of sentencing and the rights of victims.

3.3 Discretion by the judicial or other competent independent authority shall be exercised at all stages of the proceedings by ensuring full accountability and only in accordance with the rule of law.

3.4 Non-custodial measures imposing an obligation on the offender, applied before or instead of formal proceedings or trial, shall require the offender's consent.

3.5 Decisions on the imposition of non-custodial measures shall be subject to review by a judicial or other competent independent authority, upon application by the offender.

3.6 The offender shall be entitled to make a request or complaint to a judicial or other competent independent authority on matters affecting his or her individual rights in the implementation of non-custodial measures.

3.7 Appropriate machinery shall be provided for the recourse and, if possible, redress of any grievance related to non-compliance with internationally recognized human rights.

3.8 Non-custodial measures shall not involve medical or psychological experimentation on, or undue risk of physical or mental injury to, the offender.

3.9 The dignity of the offender subject to non-custodial measures shall be protected at all times.

3.10 In the implementation of non-custodial measures, the offender's rights shall not be restricted further than was authorized by the competent authority that rendered the original decision.

3.11 In the application of non-custodial measures, the offender's right to privacy shall be respected, as shall be the right to privacy of the offender's family.

3.12 The offender's personal records shall be kept strictly confidential and closed to third parties. Access to such records shall be limited to persons directly concerned with the disposition of the offender's case or to other duly authorized persons.

4. Saving clause

4.1 Nothing in the present Rules shall be interpreted as precluding the application of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, 3/ the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (The Beijing Rules), 7/ the Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment 8/ or any other human rights instruments and standards recognized by the international community and relating to the treatment of offenders and the protection of their basic human rights.

7/ Resolution 40/33, annex.

8/ Resolution 43/173, annex.

II. PRE-TRIAL STAGE

5. Pre-trial dispositions

5.1 Where appropriate and compatible with the legal system, the police, the prosecution service or other agencies dealing with criminal cases should be empowered to discharge the offender if they consider that it is not necessary to proceed with the case for the protection of society, crime prevention or the promotion of respect for the law and the rights of victims. For the purpose of deciding upon the appropriateness of discharge or determination of proceedings, a set of established criteria shall be developed within each legal system. For minor cases the prosecutor may impose suitable non-custodial measures, as appropriate.

6. Avoidance of pre-trial detention

6.1 Pre-trial detention shall be used as a means of last resort in criminal proceedings, with due regard for the investigation of the alleged offence and for the protection of society and the victim.

6.2 Alternatives to pre-trial detention shall be employed at as early a stage as possible. Pre-trial detention shall last no longer than necessary to achieve the objectives stated under rule 5.1 and shall be administered humanely and with respect for the inherent dignity of human beings.

6.3 The offender shall have the right to appeal to a judicial or other competent independent authority in cases where pre-trial detention is employed.

III. TRIAL AND SENTENCING STAGE

7. Social inquiry reports

7.1 If the possibility of social inquiry reports exists, the judicial authority may avail itself of a report prepared by a competent, authorized official or agency. The report should contain social information on the offender that is relevant to the person's pattern of offending and current offences. It should also contain information and recommendations that are relevant to the sentencing procedure. The report shall be factual, objective and unbiased, with any expression of opinion clearly identified.

8. Sentencing dispositions

8.1 The judicial authority, having at its disposal a range of non-custodial measures, should take into consideration in making its decision the rehabilitative needs of the offender, the protection of society and the interests of the victim, who should be consulted whenever appropriate.

8.2 Sentencing authorities may dispose of cases in the following ways:

(a) Verbal sanctions, such as admonition, reprimand and warning;

(b) Conditional discharge;

(c) Status penalties;

(d) Economic sanctions and monetary penalties, such as fines and day-fines;

(e) Confiscation or an expropriation order;

(f) Restitution to the victim or a compensation order;

(g) Suspended or deferred sentence;

(h) Probation and judicial supervision;

(i) A community service order;

(j) Referral to an attendance centre;

(k) House arrest;

(l) Any other mode of non-institutional treatment;

(m) Some combination of the measures listed above.

IV. POST-SENTENCING STAGE

9. Post-sentencing dispositions

9.1 The competent authority shall have at its disposal a wide range of post-sentencing alternatives in order to avoid institutionalization and to assist offenders in their early reintegration into society.

9.2 Post-sentencing dispositions may include:

(a) Furlough and half-way houses;

(b) Work or education release;

(c) Various forms of parole;

(d) Remission;

(e) Pardon.

9.3 The decision on post-sentencing dispositions, except in the case of pardon, shall be subject to review by a judicial or other competent independent authority, upon application of the offender.

9.4 Any form of release from an institution to a non-custodial programme shall be considered at the earliest possible stage.

V. IMPLEMENTATION OF NON-CUSTODIAL MEASURES

10. Supervision

10.1 The purpose of supervision is to reduce reoffending and to assist the offender's integration into society in a way which minimizes the likelihood of a return to crime.

10.2 If a non-custodial measure entails supervision, the latter shall be carried out by a competent authority under the specific conditions prescribed by law.

10.3 Within the framework of a given non-custodial measure, the most suitable type of supervision and treatment should be determined for each individual case aimed at assisting the offender to work on his or her offending. Supervision and treatment should be periodically reviewed and adjusted as necessary.

10.4 Offenders should, when needed, be provided with psychological, social and material assistance and with opportunities to strengthen links with the community and facilitate their reintegration into society.

11. Duration

11.1 The duration of a non-custodial measure shall not exceed the period established by the competent authority in accordance with the law.

11.2 Provision may be made for early termination of the measure if the offender has responded favourably to it.

12. Conditions

12.1 If the competent authority shall determine the conditions to be observed by the offender, it should take into account both the needs of society and the needs and rights of the offender and the victim.

12.2 The conditions to be observed shall be practical, precise and as few as possible, and shall be aimed at reducing the likelihood of an offender relapsing into criminal behaviour and at increasing the offender's chances of social integration, taking into account the needs of the victim.

12.3 At the beginning of the application of a non-custodial measure, the offender shall receive an explanation, orally and in writing, of the conditions governing the application of the measure, including the offender's obligations and rights.

12.4 The conditions may be modified by the competent authority under the established statutory provisions, in accordance with the progress made by the offender.

13. Treatment process

13.1 Within the framework of a given non-custodial measure, in appropriate cases, various schemes, such as case-work, group therapy, residential programmes and the specialized treatment of various categories of offenders, should be developed to meet the needs of offenders more effectively.

13.2 Treatment should be conducted by professionals who have suitable training and practical experience.

13.3 When it is decided that treatment is necessary, efforts should be made to understand the offender's background, personality, aptitude, intelligence, values and, especially, the circumstances leading to the commission of the offence.

13.4 The competent authority may involve the community and social support systems in the application of non-custodial measures.

13.5 Case-load assignments shall be maintained as far as practicable at a manageable level to ensure the effective implementation of treatment programmes.

13.6 For each offender, a case record shall be established and maintained by the competent authority.

14. Discipline and breach of conditions

14.1 A breach of the conditions to be observed by the offender may result in a modification or revocation of the non-custodial measure.

14.2 The modification or revocation of the non-custodial measure shall be made by the competent authority; this shall be done only after a careful examination of the facts adduced by both the supervising officer and the offender.

14.3 The failure of a non-custodial measure should not automatically lead to the imposition of a custodial measure.

14.4 In the event of a modification or revocation of the non-custodial measure, the competent authority shall attempt to establish a suitable alternative non-custodial measure. A sentence of imprisonment may be imposed only in the absence of other suitable alternatives.

14.5 The power to arrest and detain the offender under supervision in cases where there is a breach of the conditions shall be prescribed by law.

14.6 Upon modification or revocation of the non-custodial measure, the offender shall have the right to appeal to a judicial or other competent independent authority.

VI. STAFF

15. Recruitment

15.1 There shall be no discrimination in the recruitment of staff on the grounds of race, colour, sex, age, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. The policy regarding staff recruitment should take into consideration national policies of affirmative action and reflect the diversity of the offenders to be supervised.

15.2 Persons appointed to apply non-custodial measures should be personally suitable and, whenever possible, have appropriate professional training and practical experience. Such qualifications shall be clearly specified.

15.3 To secure and retain qualified professional staff, appropriate service status, adequate salary and benefits commensurate with the nature of the work should be ensured and ample opportunities should be provided for professional growth and career development.

16. Staff training

16.1 The objective of training shall be to make clear to staff their responsibilities with regard to rehabilitating the offender, ensuring the offender's rights and protecting society. Training should also give staff an understanding of the need to co-operate in and co-ordinate activities with the agencies concerned.

16.2 Before entering duty, staff shall be given training that includes instruction on the nature of non-custodial measures, the purposes of supervision and the various modalities of the application of non-custodial measures.

16.3 After entering on duty, staff shall maintain and improve their knowledge and professional capacity by attending in-service training and refresher courses. Adequate facilities shall be made available for that purpose.

VII. VOLUNTEERS AND OTHER COMMUNITY RESOURCES

17. Public participation

17.1 Public participation should be encouraged as it is a major resource and one of the most important factors in improving ties between offenders undergoing non-custodial measures and the family and community. It should complement the efforts of the criminal justice administration.

17.2 Public participation should be regarded as an opportunity for members of the community to contribute to the protection of their society.

18. Public understanding and co-operation

18.1 Government agencies, the private sector and the general public should be encouraged to support voluntary organizations that promote non-custodial measures.

18.2 Conferences, seminars, symposia and other activities should be regularly organized to stimulate awareness of the need for public participation in the application of non-custodial measures.

18.3 All forms of the mass media should be utilized to help to create a constructive public attitude, leading to activities conducive to a broader application of non-custodial treatment and the social integration of offenders.

18.4 Every effort should be made to inform the public of the importance of its role in the implementation of non-custodial measures.

19. Volunteers

19.1 Volunteers shall be carefully screened and recruited on the basis of their aptitude for and interest in the work involved. They shall be properly trained for the specific responsibilities to be discharged by them and shall have access to support and counselling from, and the opportunity to consult with, the competent authority.

19.2 Volunteers should encourage offenders and their families to develop meaningful ties with the community and a broader sphere of contact by providing counselling and other appropriate forms of assistance according to their capacity and the offenders' needs.

19.3 Volunteers shall be insured against accident, injury and public liability when carrying out their duties. They shall be reimbursed for authorized expenditures incurred in the course of their work. Public recognition should be extended to them for the services they render for the well-being of the community.

VIII. RESEARCH, PLANNING, POLICY FORMULATION AND EVALUATION

20. Research and planning

20.1 As an essential aspect of the planning process, efforts should be made to involve both public and private bodies in the organization and promotion of research on the non-custodial treatment of offenders.

20.2 Research on the problems that confront clients, practitioners, the community and policy makers should be carried out on a regular basis.

20.3 Research and information mechanisms should be built into the criminal justice system for the collection and analysis of data and statistics on the implementation of non-custodial treatment for offenders.

21. Policy formulation and programme development

21.1 Programmes for non-custodial measures should be systematically planned and implemented as an integral part of the criminal justice system within the national development process.

21.2 Regular evaluations should be carried out with a view to implementing non-custodial measures more effectively.

21.3 Periodic reviews should be conducted to assess the objectives, functioning and effectiveness of non-custodial measures.

22. Linkages with relevant agencies and activities

22.1 Suitable mechanisms should be evolved at various levels to facilitate the establishment of linkages between services responsible for non-custodial measures, other branches of the criminal justice system, social development and welfare agencies, both governmental and non-governmental, in such fields as health, housing, education and labour, and the mass media.

23. International co-operation

23.1 Efforts shall be made to promote scientific co-operation between countries in the field of non-institutional treatment. Research, training, technical assistance and the exchange of information among Member States on non-custodial measures should be strengthened, through the United Nations institutes for the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders, in close collaboration with the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat.

23.2 Comparative studies and the harmonization of legislative provisions should be furthered to expand the range of non-institutional options and facilitate their application across national frontiers, in accordance with the Model Treaty on the Transfer of Supervision of Offenders Conditionally Sentenced or Conditionally Released. 9/

9/ See resolution 45/119.